



Hospital parking – a charge too far

If you work in a hospital in England and drive to work, chances are you will be paying to park in the hospital car park.

UNISON, the trade union that represents the whole NHS team, believes that car parking charges should not apply to staff during their working hours. If those charges were dropped that would have a significant impact on the earnings of the staff in the 67% of trusts in England where parking charges apply.

That's why we have produced our fair parking charter which we want health branches in England to use as the basis for negotiations with trusts to

abolish parking charges for staff. Our ultimate aim is for all staff to be given free parking permits to use while they are at work. Together with a guaranteed space for all staff with a valid parking permit.

However, we recognise that this change may be difficult to bring in immediately as it has budgetary implications for trusts who currently charge staff for parking.

So, we are calling for a number of measures to reduce the financial burden on staff in the short term while plans are made to scrap parking charges.

We are calling on trusts to:

- commit to scrap parking charges for staff within two years and agree an implementation plan with UNISON
- only charge staff for the hours their vehicles are parked at the hospital
- guarantee a parking space for all staff with a valid parking permit
- provide emergency bays for on-call staff so they can park for free
- ensure that the cost of parking is affordable, and charges are consistent across all sites, by charging on a sliding scale so staff earning less pay less
- immediately give all staff with a disability free on-site parking
- immediately make on-site parking free for all staff working a night shift
- recognise the needs of staff whose choice about using their car is limited by the nature of their job or the availability of public transport and give these staff free parking
- in the short term use profits from staff parking charges to improve the safety and security of car parks
- develop sustainable transport schemes like staff buses, pool cars for community staff, park and ride schemes and incentive for bicycle use and car sharing schemes.

- There will also be other issues that will flow from these discussions that can be looked at after the initial issue of charging staff to park has been addressed. These include bringing the contracts for the management and operation of car parks back in house, and to have a look at the impact of on-site facilities that encourage people to spend more time on site and therefore in their parking space.



What can branches do?

UNISON is asking all branches to speak to their trust management about signing up to our NHS car parking charter. At the same time you could run a local campaign and encourage members to get involved and help put pressure on your trust. Find out more at unison.org.uk/hospitalparking.

We would also like branches to ask members what issues they currently have around parking and come up with some case studies that can be used in the campaign nationally as well as locally. You can send information to us at health@unison.co.uk

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unison.org.uk/join or
0800 0 857 857

